

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 18 to page 3, line 23, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Or, instead of using an SE, users could consult a categorization system (CS) or a common variant, the hierarchical categorization system (HCS) such as the shopping guides provided by www.msn.com

~~<<http://www.netscape.com>>~~ www.netscape.com

~~<<http://www.ebay.com>>~~ www.ebay.com

~~<<http://www.dmoz.org>>~~ www.dmoz.org. These systems present information on a great number of discrete items, which the HCS retains in an Item Data Base (IDB). Typical HCS systems provide a hierarchy or taxonomy that attempts to organize the subject matter in a tree structure, allowing a user to drill down through successive category layers to get progressively closer to the object of their search. Each item in the IDB is "tagged" with a set of categories that characterizes the item. Very often an HCS will show, at each category level, all the items pertaining to that level. Moving to a category at the next lower level in effect filters out all items not belonging to that lower category. The user can proceed in this fashion until the number of items displayed is small enough to be readily scanned visually, or until the maximum category precision is reached.

For example, to use the MSN system to search for the Black & Decker toaster, the user would first click on "Shopping" on the MSN home page. This would display another page containing about 20 categories including "Apparel", "Autos", "Books" and "Gourmet and Kitchen".

Clicking on "Gourmet and Kitchen" displays a page listing more categories including "Bakeware", "Cookware" and "Kitchen Appliances". Clicking on "Kitchen Appliances" displays a page containing several categories of appliances including "Small Appliances", under which are listed types of small appliances, including "Toasters". Clicking on "Toasters" displays a page that lists recommended toasters as well as links to some toaster sellers. Visiting a few of the web sites of these toaster sellers will quickly locate one that sells the Black & Decker T1400.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 12 to page 7, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The difficulties associated with using HCSs is not restricted to searches for tangible goods or merchandise. The www.epicurious.com website maintains a database of 11,000 recipes that may be accessed via a HCS. Moreover, the hierarchy has been structured in such a way that there are many possible paths to a given goal. The user may choose from several main categories such as "Main Ingredient", "Cuisine", "Course" or "Preparation Method". If the user wanted to find a Mexican broiled appetizer containing cheese, he could follow the path Cuisine>Mexican>Course>Appetizer>MainIngredient>Cheese>Preparation>Broil and discover that Avocado Quesadillas satisfy all his requirements. Alternatively, he could follow the path Course>Appetizers>Preparation>Broil>Cuisine>Mexican>MainIngredient>Cheese, or Preparation>Broil>Mainingredient>Cheese>Cuisine>Mexican>Course>Appetizer and find the same recipe. But if the user wished to use additional criteria not thought of or provided by the creator of the HCS, the user must again rely on keyword searching. For example, if the user wanted to find a vegetarian and/or low fat recipe from amongst the recipes displayed by one of the above paths he would have to use the built-in SE to search within those recipes for appropriate keywords. But should he use "vegetarian" or "meatless"? Should he use "low fat" or "low calorie", or perhaps "diet", or "dietetic"? And it may well be that even a meatless recipe doesn't use the words "meatless" or "vegetarian" anywhere in the text of the recipe. These uncertainties further illustrate the unreliability and incompleteness of information derived from an HCS.